The LITTLE COLONEL'S GOOD TIMES BOOK

ANNIE · FELLOWS · JOHNSTON

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The LITTLE COLONEL'S Good Times Book

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L. C. PAGE & COMPANY, Boston, Mass.

Annie Fellows Johnston

The Little Colonel's Good Times Book

By

ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON

Author of "The Little Colonel Series," "Big Brother," "Ole Mammy's Torment," "Joel: A Boy of Galilee," "Asa Holmes," etc.

DECORATED BY P. VERBURG

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The Little Colonel's Good Times Book

UP in an attic where I sometimes go to rummage through old chests and look through piles of time-stained letters, I lately came across two things which gave me a peculiar pleasure. One was an old-fashioned "charm-string," and the other some squares of patchwork, made long ago in a country school-house, during the winter noon hours when it was too cold and snowy for the usual games outside.

The first is only a motley collection of glass buttons, strung on a faded ribbon. When following the fashion

of the school, I began to gather them, when the ribbon was a new one and rose-pink, I wondered why they called it charm string. Now I know. Each button of amethyst or ruby or other rainbow hue is like a crystal-gazer's globe. Looking through it I can see the magic moment when it was added to my string.

This little blue one ringed with white! I'd quite forgotten that there ever was a button made like that. But looking through it now, I recall as if it were but yesterday, how it came into my possession. I got it in a trade, and long I haggled with the boy across the aisle to make him give it up; emptying my pencil-box, and searching through my desk for something that might not meet the scornful uplift of his freckled nose, in lordly disapproval of "jus' girl's things." And I can see the very warts upon his grimy little hand, held out to take the

objects for which at last he deigned to trade: a big red wine-sap apple, the stub of an indelible pencil, and an agate, badly nicked.

That is the scene. The charm is, that for the moment, once more I am the child in ruffled pinafore, grasping the prize I coveted, seeing the world and human kind as one must see it who has not yet passed the limits of the Second Reader.

And this wee button, like a drop of honey, dates farther back than that. It was one that fastened an old-time gown of flowered organdy, one of wide flowing sleeves and hoop-skirt fashion; and fingering that button while I listened, I sat upon the wearer's lap and took long, rapt excursions into the realms of song and story. A lullaby comes back with that, and fire-flies in the summer gloom outside, and in the dusky low-ceiled room, sweet with drowsy song,

the creaking of a rocking chair, and smell of jessamine.

This amber-apple one! A dear old lady gave me that, and turned a stiff, prim duty-visit to a time of joy. For though her hair was white, and when she went to fetch the button she leaned upon a black, gold-headed stick, I saw a part of her was young as I, and knew that she knew how it felt to sit perched up on a great chair entirely too tall, conscious of new blue shoes, and wide blue sash smoothed down behind, and make half-scared replies to awesome elders. In the box she brought there were some tiny artificial rosebuds, and lace that faintly smelled of sandal-wood, with which she showed me how to make a doll's hat; that and the amber apple-shaped button! And now when little guests look up with shy eyes into mine, I think perhaps it is that charm which helps me to interpret

their timid silences, keeping still young a part of me to answer to the heart of childhood, as that dear old lady answered mine.

The string is full, and it would take the covers of a book to hold the histories of them all. But I have told enough for you to see how much the faded ribbon holds besides those bits of glass. It is the same with all those squares of patchwork. That piece of white with red dots scattered through, means more than Sally's apron. It means the merriest soul upon the playground, the champion of the spelling matches; so popular that for her sake the big boys let us join them in their games of "Two old cat," and yet, alas! so feminine, they jeered us when she caught the ball, not in her hands, but in that little ruffled apron.

The stitches straggle now and then, for sometimes on the outskirts of our peaceful sewing-bees the boys waged

crayon-fights, and gave vent to pent-up energies in ways to keep us starting from our seats with shrieks and pricked fingers. This plaid block with the squares of buff marks the noon they "crossed the Alps" upon the benches, jumping from one desk-top to another, till the stove-pipe, long and many jointed, fell with a bang, filling the room with smoke and giving us a holiday till it could be replaced.

Now, when I recall these happenings, and think how long they have been hidden in my memory, they seem to me like things that have been lost within the woods, buried a little deeper every year by the falling leaves of the succeeding Autumns, and now revealed by a chance wind that blew the drifts aside. I know a host of other things are hidden thus, which only need a passing touch to bring to mind, and think regretfully how eas-

ily I might have set some mark by which I could retrace my steps to them, as one would blaze a trail through a forest that he might find his way back again.

If I had only kept a record of those brimfull, strenuous schooldays, what a well of laughter it would be to-day! I did acquire the habit later. For twenty years I've kept a journal, and for so many reasons found the course a good one, that I heartily commend it to every girl and boy who knows enough to use a pen. Not the conventional diary, however, which every one at some time in his life probably has attempted, starting out with grim determination to write a few lines every day, and soon discarding it as an intolerable bore.

Write only when you've something that you want to keep. Maybe a fortnight may go by without a line, and then you'll need a page or two to

chronicle the doings of one afternoon. One reason that so many diaries are thrown aside in the beginning, is that the writer patterns after those in fiction, and turns his inmost being wrong side out, to make a note of all his feelings. Now in the kind of diary I have in mind, feelings and self-analysis are as out of place as they would be on a play-ground. Any game would be a failure in which the players kept a finger on their pulses and stopped at intervals to take their temperature. The game of Life is no exception. You miss the goals you're after when you stop to be self-conscious.

Since "A boy's will is the wind's will, and the thoughts of Youth are long, long thoughts," it is better not to put down in black and white the fluctuations of your soul. In the growing up process it is perfectly natural that you should be a sort of

weather-vane, but some day when you are pointing due west, it would be a blow to your vanity to come across the crude confessions of an earlier stage, when you were sighting some other point of the compass. Probably in a fit of disgust you would pitch the book into the fire.

First and last put out of mind the thought that some one else may read what you have written and maybe quote it in your memoirs. A diary written with that end in view must be above all things else self-conscious. The kind that some day will be worth a fortune to you, is one kept simply in the squirrel-fashion of nut-gathering time. Once in a while, in the midst of care-free frisking, and eating your fill of the plump nuts on your particular tree, give a thought to the time of need that may be coming, and just drop a few into some hiding place for a winter store. If we

could always trust our memories this need not be. But I have seen people scarce in their twenties, whose minds were so beclouded by the worries and misfortunes of their present, that all their happy past counted for nothing. They had no store of cheer laid by, no tangible reminder of past good times, by which to resurrect them.

So for the reasons given in the rhymes which head these pages, begin a record of your Good Times early; and like the Little Colonel's string of pearls, some day you'll find it has become a priceless Rosary of Remembrance.

Annie Fellows Johnston

The Little Colonel's Good Times Book Birthday Record

January

Love can always find some way to keep the red letter days of its calendar.

The Little Colonel's Holidays. Page 92.

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January

The memories we dig into our souls go with us into eternity.

The Little Colonel's House Party. Page 233.

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February

Wishing that I could put a slice of my good times away in a box every day and save it to take home and enjoy afterward.

The Little Colonel's House Party. Page 95.

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February

'Tis the King's call. O list!
Thou heart and hand of mine, keep tryst.
Keep tryst or die!
The Little Colonel's Christmas Vacation. Page 78.

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March

"Love will find a way" to make us forget the unpleasant things and remember only the good.
The Little Colonel at Boarding School. Page 245.

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March

The phrase 'The road of the loving heart' is a gospel in itself. 'The day is not longer than his kindness' is a new beatitude. Fame dies and honours perish, but 'loving kindness' is immortal.

The Little Colonel's House Party. Page 212.

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April

The tune thou pipest may not bring *thee* pleasure, but if it sets the world to dancing it is enough.

Mary Ware: The Little Colonel's Chum. Page 250.

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April

You know remembering things is like looking back over a road.

The Little Colonel's House Party. Page 213.

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May

Only through unselfish service to others comes the happiness that is highest and best.

The Gate of the Giant Scissors. Page 45.

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May

Patience is putting up with whatever happens to you, without making a fuss about it.
The Little Colonel's Holidays. Page 66.

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June

The motto written deep across his breast was this: "To ease the burden of the world."

Mary Ware: The Little Colonel's Chum. Page 246.

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June

When the old friends go, look around for new ones, and you'll always find them.

The Little Colonel's Holidays. Page 128.

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July

Only those who belong to the kingdom of loving hearts and happy homes can enter here.
The Gate of the Giant Scissors. Page 45.

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July

The more we mix our neighbours with ourselves in our prayers, the better He is pleased.

The Little Colonel's Holidays. Page 179.

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August

Full well I know that heaven always finds a way to help the man who helps himself.

The Little Colonel's Christmas Vacation. Page 88.

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August

And so may'st thou, while swinging onward, faithful to thy orbit, reflect the light of heaven upon thy fellow men.

Mary Ware: The Little Colonel's Chum. Page 255.

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September

Life is a rosary
Strung with beads of little deeds
Done humbly, Lord, as unto Thee.
The Little Colonel's Christmas Vacation. Page 92.

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September

True hope is swift and flies with swallows' wings.
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.
The Little Colonel's Knight Comes Riding. Page 256.

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October

Somehow, no matter how happy the holidays are, it always seems so good to get home.

The Little Colonel's Holidays. Page 230.

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October

The world expects us to do certain things. We must keep tryst with these expectations.

The Little Colonel's Christmas Vacation. Page 91.

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November

If we'll just grapple the things we dislike most to do, the little homely every-day duties, and busy ourselves with them, they'll help us rise above our discontent.
The Little Colonel's Christmas Vacation. Page 238.

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November

No matter how dark the outlook may be after this, I shall never believe that I have reached the end to happiness.

Mary Ware: The Little Colonel's Chum. Page 305.

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December

I only mark the hours that shine.
The Little Colonel: Maid of Honour. Page 99.

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December

Grant that we may make this Christmastide a White Feast, and that all our days may be worthy of thy acceptance, unstained by selfishness and full of deeds to show our love and loyalty.

The Little Colonel's Christmas Vacation. Page 136.

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Good Times Record

of

Make of this little white-bound book

A sun-dial for thy garden nook.

And on it write the sun-dial's sign:

"I only mark the hours that shine!"

What though thy garden be but small,

And thou shut in by high close wall.

A thousand happy things there be

To walk its pleasant paths with thee.

Some day when through its narrow gate

Thou hast passed out from Youth's estate,

Thou wilt be glad the dial's face

Kept of each sunny hour a trace.

Deem nothing paltry, nothing small

Which serves their joyance to recall.

One blooming apple=bough may bring

The whole bright Vision of the Spring.

One crocus in its chalice bold

A glint that shows thee all earth's gold.

One whistle of "Bob White" recall

The russet glories of the Fall.

And so sometimes, a word — a name

Kindles dull embers into flame.

Then trace the trivial round of things,

The work, the play, the happenings

That are the wings of Childhood's Day,

On which it takes swift flight away.

Not that these garden paths are best,

Each age in its own way is blessed.

If we to leave the flowers are loath,

We miss the fruitage and the growth.

Who clings to first-learned paths and sights

Will never scale the beckoning heights.

Who says that Youth is best, says wrong.

True, 'tis the time of jest and song,

A golden Age, and good forsooth,

But only garden=views hath Youth.

Better the time when through its gate

One passes on to man's estate,

And from its mountains sees unrolled

Life's wider visions, manifold.

Yet happy they whose hearts hold fast

The memories of a golden past;

Who bring from out that morning-time

A morning freshness to their prime;

Who carry on their pilgrimage

A zest that time cannot assuage,

And find in those old scenes of cheer

New courage for each new, strange year,

And like the bees, when they have stored

In waxen cells their honey-board,

Have wherewithal to fill their need.

When flowerless lies the moor and mead

Then cell=like let each page be filled

With something from these days distilled,

To think on when come days of dole,

Those hoar-frost seasons of the soul.

Say not thou hast not aught to board,

Even the weeds some sweets afford.

What to thee now looks commonplace,

In time may wear a beauteous face.

It may seem naught, the firelight

Which shines upon the hearth tonight,

Yet if upon this page is laid

The record of the games thou'st played,

The neighbor's name who came to call,—

The story read aloud to all—

No other touches needst thou give

To make the whole home picture live.

'Twill rise up in thy heart sometime

To warm thee in an alien clime.

'Twill all come back — the fire's glow,

The old clock ticking sweet and slow,

The cat upon the hearth-rug there,

The lamp=light touching mother's hair,

The darning basket by her side,

And father in the arm-chair wide.

Once more thou'lt feel the old room's calm.

Its atmosphere of peace and balm,

The safe warm shelter of its walls

That keeps thee so no harm befalls.

Then thou canst say, "Life still is good,

And all its ills may be withstood,

Because it gave me at the start

This talisman within my heart."

Does this page tell of rainy days?

Corn=popping times and attic plays?

Of bide=and=seek on cellar stairs?

Of circuses and jungle lairs?

Or only of some quiet nook

With apples and a story-book?

A word, a line will quite suffice

To bring such scenes back in a trice.

To make thee feel a Rainy Day

Is but a Friend in bodden gray.

A Friend who comes with dripping cloak,

To set the outer world a=soak,

That all the house=bound girls and boys

May welcome him with gleeful noise.

Some day, some dreary day, when rain

Brings with its fall a sense of pain,

How good 'twill be to turn and read

And find the laughter thou dost need.

Perhaps upon this page will be

The schoolmate's name best loved by thee.

The one who shares thy sports and schemes,

The one who dreams with thee thy dreams.

Thou needst not then to more than say —

"We skated on the pond today."

Or, "After school we sat awhile,

Talking together on the stile."

That sentence like a narrow frame

Will hold the picture thou dost name.

'Twill all come back—that trusting glance

Met under every circumstance,

The hand out-stretched to share with thee,

The heart so quick to bear with thee,

The sweet unselfishness which asks

The heaviest loads, the hardest tasks.

A friendship strong and staunch and true,

That like the giant oak=tree grew,

Adding each year a larger ring,

In wide and wider circling.

Though other friends prove broken reeds,

And fail thee in thy later needs,

Still this one friendship, strong and deep

Thy faith in human=kind shall keep.

And make thee for its old dear sake

Many a venture undertake.

The measure friendship sets for thee.

That stature thou wilt try to be.

Thy soul to larger garments fit

Because thy friend expected it.

And oft that thought will be the spur

What is this book most like unto?

A thousand symbols rise in view,

A thousand similes there be

To say "this page is likest me."

It is a desert blank, where yet

No caravan its track has set,

But where thou plantest, mile by mile,

Palms to return to after while.

Here an oasis, there a well,

The story of thy passing tell.

Happy the pilgrim, backward borne,

To wells like these when travel=worn,

Who slips his sandals at their brink,

And stoops his weary head to drink.

Refreshed he rises from their spell,

So strange is Memory's miracle!

Or 'tis a ship, and every page

A harbor for brief anchorage.

Wherein to take on cargoes rare

From treasure ports of Everywhere.

But all these metaphors we bring

Are beads upon a single string.

One thought runs through them all, as leads

One thread through all a rosary's beads.

Whether we call this little tome

A sun=dial or a honey=comb,

A green oasis or a trail,

Or treasure=ship to Age set sail,

It makes no difference. They all

Serve the same purpose to recall.

The purpose that in each heart dwells,

To wreathe glad hours with immortelles.

Think not the task a useless one.

Ask not what boots it when all's done.

For treasure in the memory stored

Is not a miser's selfish board.

Not coin to count while others sleep.

Not gold o'er which close guard to keep.

But 'tis a coffer rich indeed,

From which to draw in time of need.

Art troubled? Are the skies o'ercast?

So were they often in the past,

And yet next morn from clouds were free.

By what has been, learn what may be!

Art wounded? Early scars reveal

That this wound too, in time will heal.

Look back! Each storm was rainbow-spanned!

Then this flood too, thou canst withstand.

Look back! Thy furrows, sown and tilled,

Each with a harvest was well filled!

They bid thee hope this larger field

Good grain an hundredfold may yield.

Look back! The graves that once were bare

Are green with grass, with blooms are fair!

So shall this new-made mound be set

With myrtle and with violet,

And hope's calm eyes see through the gloom

The Easter Angel at the tomb.

And thus in myriad ways may we

By what has been, learn what will be.

With this the purpose of thy book,

And motive of each backward look,

Then not in vain the hours thus spent,

They'll serve to arm thee with Content.

Aye more! For whatsoever brings

Strength for thy own far journeyings,

And sends thee on thy way more fit

To reach thy goal because of it—

Whatever armors thee with Hope.

And helps thee with Life's ills to cope,

Will also help to ease the load

Of fellow travellers on thy road.

No spring can bubble from the ground

And not spread verdure all around.

No bird throat can with song o'erflow

And all the woodland aisles not know.

The heart aglow with Hope and Cheer

Must shed its warmth on all things near.

So mayst thou too, a blessing be

To all who tread the road with thee.

No loftier aim is there than this

In all God's universe, I wis,

Than just to bravely trudge along,

Easing thine own load with a song,

Till those beside thee, too, forget

The burdens on their shoulders set.

So shall mankind account thee friend,

When on thy Record's writ, "The End."

Additional Good Times Records

Additional Good Times Records

Additional Good Times Records

Additional Good Times Records

Additional Good Times Records

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